

Health Officer News

March 2011

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Message from the State Health Commissioner

Winter in Indiana has been especially tough this year. Since the New Year, we have only enjoyed a couple of weekends without snow or ice covering the ground here in Central Indiana. I think we are all ready for a little more sunshine and warmer weather. As the seasons shift from winter to spring, our public health concerns shift from cold weather concerns to issues that occur when the weather begins to warm. The topics at the next ISDH Health Officer meeting reflect our seasonal public health issues. Dr. Jennifer House will discuss Arboviral disease and rabies and animal bites. We will also build on the assessment presentation from the Fall ISDH Health Officer meeting with a "Budget Basics" presentation from Dan Jones, Assistant Director, Budget Division, and Department of Local Government Finance. In the evaluations from the Fall ISDH Health Officer meeting, many of you requested a presentation about the issue of obesity. The Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity launched the Indiana Comprehensive Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan in January and division director, Marcie Memmer, will join us to discuss this initiative. For those interested in learning about setting up your local health department to bill Medicaid and Medicare, we will have a representative from HP Executive Services, Mona Green, to answer your questions.

We know how busy health officers are, but we hope you take the time to join us at the Garrison Conference Center at Fort Harrison State Park on March 30th.

You may register for the meeting online at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2011HealthOfficerMeetingRegistration>.



Greg Larkin,
MD, FAAFP
State Health
Commissioner

Hot Topics in Public Health

They're Back! The Resurgence of Bed Bugs.

There has been a dramatic increase in bed bug incidence over the last several years and anticipate that we will be dealing with them for some time to come. Bed bugs are hardly new. They were first described around 400 B.C. and are found worldwide. By the 1950's bed bugs in the U.S. were largely controlled, and were only a problem in rare situations. However, due to a number of factors, most notably increased international travel and changes in pest control practices, they have mounted a comeback over the last decade.

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Bed bugs are crack and crevice critters, and are about ¼ inch long when fully grown. They like to hide in places like mattresses and box springs, headboards, baseboards, furniture and potentially your luggage when traveling. While it should be emphasized that bed bugs do not spread disease, they are a nuisance and can be quite costly to control. The only sure way to eliminate an infestation is to utilize a pest control professional and several treatments are often necessary. You can help protect yourself and your family from picking up bed bugs by taking several common sense steps. Upon arrival in a motel room, examine the mattress and box springs of the bed, looking for telltale fecal spots or cast skins of bed bugs. You should store your luggage off of carpeted areas and not on beds or upholstered furniture. Upon return, examine your luggage for signs of bed bugs and place your clothes in the dryer on high heat for 30 minutes. Avoid purchasing second hand mattresses and carefully examine used furniture and clothing. Never pick up items from dumpsters or the side of the road as they could be infested.

More tips and information about bed bugs can be found on the ISDH web site at

<http://www.in.gov/isdh/24605.htm>. If you would like additional information, you can contact Bryan Price, Medical Entomologist at 317-351-7190 or email at bprice@isdh.in.gov, Lee Green, legreen@isdh.in.gov or April Arroyo-Monroe, arroyo-monroe@isdh.in.gov.

*Local Health Department
Outreach Division's Mission*

The Local Health Department Outreach Division strengthens the partnerships between the Indiana State Department of Health and the local health departments through multiple modes of communication, education and training, and customer services.

Epidemiology Update

Increase in Reported Acute Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) Infections in Indiana

Sara Sczesny, MPH, BS, MT (ASCP)

Hepatitis C Epidemiologist

Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH)

There has been an increase in reported acute HCV cases in the first 5 weeks of the reporting year 2011. Thus far, 10 acute cases have been reported to the ISDH. Based on past reporting years, it takes approximately 20 to 25 weeks before 10 acute cases are reported to the ISDH. No link between any of the cases has been identified at this time, but there appears to be 2, potentially 3, clusters. The collection of close contact exposure data has been identified as a problem in determining linkage, or the absence of linkage, among these cases. Some counties collect detailed data for close contacts whereas others collect no data. In order to better understand the epidemiology of HCV infections in Indiana, the ISDH is asking that all local health departments collect first and last name, date of birth/age, address/phone number, and type of contact (household, social, sexual, drug use, etc.) for contacts that are suspected/known to have HCV infections and for contacts that may have been exposed to the case's blood. At-risk contacts should be questioned for symptoms, encouraged to get tested for HCV to know their test status, and educated about the transmission and prevention of HCV. Contact information should be included in the comment section of the HCV case investigation form (State Form 52588) until a permanent solution is available. The case definition for acute and chronic HCV infections is located at http://www.cdc.gov/osels/ph_surveillance/nndss/phs/infdis2011.htm. Please contact Sara Sczesny, ISDH Hepatitis C Epidemiologist, at 317-234-2827 or ssczesny@isdh.in.gov if you have questions.

ISDH 2011 Spring Health Officer Meeting

Please join us at the ISDH Spring Health Officer Meeting on March 30, 2011 at Fort Harrison's Garrison Conference Center, 6002 North Post Road, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46216.

Some of the highlighted topics will be:

Budget Basics

Local Health Maintenance Fund and Tobacco Settlement Grants

Rabies/Animal Bites

How to Bill Medicaid

Isolation and Quarantine Guidance

Please view the Health Officer Meeting Agenda and register online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2011HealthOfficerMeetingRegistration>

For More Information, contact Jessica Trimble, Director at 317-234-6623 or jtrimble@isdh.in.gov

Division Profile: Vector Control

The ISDH Entomology Lab, part of the Zoonotic and Environmental Epidemiology Division, was founded in 1976. The St. Louis Encephalitis outbreak of 1975 led to the creation of the lab, and many vector control programs across the state. Mike Sinsko, Senior Medical Entomologist, has been the only director of the lab and retired from ISDH at the end of February. The lab is staffed by three medical entomologists. Bryan Price covers the central third of the state and is based in Indianapolis. Lee Green covers the northern third, based in Marion, and April Arroyo-Monroe is based in Vincennes, covering the southern third.

The lab assists local health departments, governmental agencies and citizens with issues related to arthropod borne diseases. A major part of its activities is related to West Nile Virus (WNV) Surveillance. The entomologists, summer interns and some local health departments collect mosquito samples throughout the season and test them for the presence of WNV, Eastern Equine Encephalitis and St. Louis Encephalitis. This program enables ISDH to warn Hoosiers about the potential of arboviral infection as early as possible. The lab also investigates incidence of tick-borne diseases, lice and bed bugs among others. Upon request, we will identify any arthropod specimen sent to the lab at no cost. Though not related to insects, the lab also occasionally deals with bird and rodent issues due to the threat of histoplasmosis and hantavirus.

Lab members also conduct training sessions, educating LHD personnel, pest control operators and the general public on issues dealing with vector control and related diseases. They are also available as speakers on a variety of topics. Finally, the entomologists will assist and train LHD Environmental Health Specialists during inspections for roaches, bed bugs, rodents, etc. For more information, contact the Entomology Lab at 317-351-7190 or email Bryan Price, bprice@isdh.in.gov, Lee Green, legreen@isdh.in.gov or April Arroyo-Monroe, aarroyo-monroe@isdh.in.gov



Meet Dr. Craig Moorman
Johnson County

Health Officer Profile:

In this issue, we are highlighting Dr. Craig Moorman of Johnson County

How Long Have You Been A Health Officer? 21 ½ Years

Are you a Part-time or Fulltime Health Officer? Part-time pay, Full- time responsibility

Are you currently a practicing physician? Yes

Medical Specialty: Pediatrics

What is the most important lesson you have learned since becoming a Health Officer? Public health is very important to our community, but is often undervalued by both the general population and community leaders.

What is the most rewarding thing you have found working as a Health Officer? What's the most challenging? 1) I have many opportunities to make a positive impact in my county and state. 2) It is challenging working with increasing mandates and decreasing funding.

What advice would you give a new Health Officer? Surround yourself with good people, and treat them well. Try to lead by example and stay involved.

What else would you like us to know about you? I'm a family guy, dedicated to my church and community. I have too many hobbies and interests and not enough time to enjoy them.

To highlight a Health Officer or Administrator in your area, please contact the LHD Outreach Division or submit suggestions via email at LHDInfo@isdh.in.gov.

ISDH Webcasts:

The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) is responsible for providing training and technical assistance to all 93 local health departments (LHDs). In order to reach as many LHDs as possible, the ISDH has begun using webcasts as a new option for training. The webcasts have many educational and economic benefits. Webcasts allow for time sensitive topics to be delivered more quickly than traditional in-person training. The timely information communicated through the weekly webcasts during the 2009-2010 H1N1 Pandemic could not have been disseminated as easily without the webcast technology. Not all staff members are available to view the live webcast, so all webcasts are recorded and archived so staff may view it at a time that is more convenient for them. Travel time is eliminated for LHD and ISDH staff participating in the webcast so education and travel budgets can be used more effectively. The ISDH does continue to understand the value of in-person training, but sees webcasting as a training tool that allows for more trainings on a variety of topics. For a list of webcasts and other trainings, visit the Training Calendar located on the bottom of the front page of the LHD Resource SharePoint site (<https://myshare.in.gov/ISDH/LHDResource/default.aspx>).

Legislative Update:

Right now the Legislature and Session is at a standstill. As you probably know, the House Democrats are in Illinois and session will not resume until at least 7 of them come back to make a quorum. This leaves our health bill, SB 366, in limbo. Right now, it has passed the Senate but must be heard by the House before it can be sent to the Governor for signature.

In a normal session, this week is the switch of bills from the House to Senate and vice versa. Since the walkout, the House Republicans have extended the deadline until Friday March 4th. However, session is scheduled to end April 29th and both houses need time to get their work done. The only way to extend the deadline beyond April 29th is for the Governor to call a Special Session. Governor Daniels has said he is willing to do so if needed.

Food Protection Update:

Food Defense

The Indiana Environmental Health Association, along with the Indiana State Department of Health, have created the Indiana Environmental Health Emergency Response Teams to respond to in-state and out-of-state emergencies that require an environmental health component. The Teams would provide the following capabilities during an emergency response situation by ensuring air quality, food safety and security, safe water supplies, safe wastewater treatment and disposal, vector control and pest management, solid waste and household hazardous waste disposal, building and shelter assessments, radiation monitoring, and educating the public on good sanitation practices.

The Indiana Environmental Health Emergency Response Teams will integrate with the Indiana Department of Homeland Security as a Mobile Support Unit. In the event of an emergency, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security may request the Indiana State Department of Health to activate the teams to respond. Ideally, the teams will consist of the best in the environmental health field. A single team consists of eight environmental health professionals in the roles of a Team Leader, Environmental Health Specialists/Generalists, and Environmental Health Information Technology support. The team will be selected by the Indiana State Department of Health administrators.

To apply, please obtain permission from your employer and complete the application. Application information may be obtained by contacting Sarah Popovich at spopovich@isdh.in.gov or (317) 233-7360. Further information related to the Teams please contact Mike Mettler, ISDH Director of Environmental Public Health, at mmettler@isdh.in.gov or 317-233-7183.

Newcomers and Retirees,

For the month of March there is no new information regarding these milestones.

Upcoming Events for 2011

ISDH-LHD Webcast	Mar 11
TB Symposium	Mar 24
ISDH Spring Health Officer Meeting	Mar 30
Public Health Week Conference	Apr 5-6
ISDH-LHD Webcast	Apr 8
Indiana Environmental Health Association	
Spring Conference	Apr 13
Good Friday (ISDH Closed)	Apr 22
Primary Election Day (ISDH Closed)	May 3
ISDH-LHD Webcast	May 13
Public Health Nurse Conference	May 18-19
Memorial Day (ISDH Closed)	May 30

Our Mission

The Indiana State Department of Health supports Indiana's economic prosperity and quality of life by promoting, protecting and providing for the health of Hoosiers in their communities.

Have comments, ideas, or questions?
Send them to Cheryl Moore,
LHD Outreach Division,
cmoore1@isdh.in.gov.